

## **5.0 PROVISIONING PRIORITY**

A key feature of the TSP System is that service users may obtain provisioning priority from service vendors for the installation of new TSP services when necessary and authorized. To obtain provisioning for a service on a priority basis, a service user must do three things: obtain authorization to invoke NSEP treatment from their invocation official; request and be assigned a provisioning priority by the TSP Program Office; and then pass the provisioning priority to a service vendor by means of a service order. The circumstances when a provisioning priority is appropriate are narrowly defined (see paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5).

A provisioning priority authorizes the service vendor to take steps to provide the service earlier than the service vendor's normal procedures would allow. In passing a provisioning priority to a service vendor, a service user may incur costs from that vendor for the faster-than-normal provisioning. The rest of this chapter describes the provisioning priority process in detail.

### **5.1 INVOCATION OF NSEP TREATMENT**

A provisioning priority is not routinely required for an NSEP service. (In most cases, the service user will request only a restoration priority.) If the service user has been able to adequately plan for the service, the service vendor can normally meet the service due date following normal business procedures. However, when the service user requires an NSEP service to be provisioned faster than the service vendor's normal procedures allow, the service user's invocation official must authorize invocation of NSEP treatment.

"Invoking NSEP treatment" refers to notification from an invocation official (see paragraph 5.2) to a service vendor that a TSP service is so vital that it must be expeditiously provisioned. To invoke NSEP treatment, a service user must obtain authorization from their invocation official and then request and be assigned a provisioning priority from the TSP Program Office. The service user then conveys the provisioning priority to the service vendor, either verbally or on a service order.

The invocation occurs when the service vendor receives the provisioning priority. The provisioning priority is contained in a TSP Authorization Code (see paragraph 3.6, TSP Authorization Code). When the service vendor receives the provisioning priority, they are required to respond to the invocation promptly, making their best effort to meet the provisioning requirement.

If the service vendor chooses to verify the invocation authorization, or if the service vendor has questions regarding the TSP assignment, then the vendor may contact the TSP Program Office. The service vendor may also contact the invocation official to verify that the

official authorized the invocation. If a discrepancy is discovered during this verification, the TSP Program Office will coordinate with the service user to determine what action is required.

Under no circumstances may the service vendor delay the processing of an Emergency TSP service request in order to verify or question its validity.

NOTE: Section II of the "National Plan for Telecommunications Support in Non-Wartime Emergencies" outlines procedures for resolving resource problems in responding to emergencies. (See paragraph 1.6 for reference information.)

## **5.2 INVOCATION OFFICIAL**

Invocation officials include the head or director of a Federal Agency, commander of a unified/specified military command, chief of a military service, commander of a major military command, or the delegates of any of the foregoing. State Governors are authorized to invoke NSEP treatment in response to state or local disasters and/or emergencies for which no Federal participation is expected to be requested.

Federal invocation officials may choose to delegate the authority to invoke NSEP treatment to other appropriate individuals within their agency. Federal Delegates may only include a general or flag officer of a military service, civilian employee of equivalent grade (e.g., Senior Executive Service member), Federal Coordinating Officer or Federal Emergency Communications Coordinator/Manager. Delegates of an invocation official may not further delegate the authority to invoke NSEP treatment to another individual.

State Governors are authorized to invoke NSEP treatment in response to state or local disasters and/or emergencies for which no Federal participation is expected to be requested. A State Governor may delegate NSEP invocation authority to no more than five (5) senior state officials, such as the head or director of the State's Telecommunications or Emergency Management/Services agency.

The State invocation official, or the delegate, incurs no direct financial liability for the requested service, but must understand that additional costs may be incurred by invocation of NSEP treatment. The service user (e.g., State, county, or city government agency or private disaster response agency) requiring the service is responsible for ensuring that funds are available to pay any service costs related to faster than normal provisioning. Delegates may only include a general or flag officer of a military service, civilian employee of equivalent grade (e.g., Senior Executive Service member), Federal Coordinating Officer, or Federal Emergency Communications Coordinator/Manager.

Delegates never have invocation authority by virtue of title alone, but must always be identified by the invocation official and designated as such in writing to the Manager, NCS. No Federal agency may delegate the authority to invoke NSEP treatment other than as specified in this manual.

Invocation officials and their delegates must be identified in writing to the TSP Program Office before their first invocation. The TSP Program Office will maintain a list of invocation officials and their delegates; however, it is the responsibility of each agency to provide the TSP Program Office with current information. (See paragraph 7.6, Identification of Invocation Officials.)

### **5.3 PREVENTING ABUSE OF PROVISIONING PRIORITY**

Service users should not request provisioning priority in the following circumstances:

- To make up for time lost as a result of inadequate advance planning
- To activate service(s) for which required customer premises equipment (e.g., government-furnished modems, encryption equipment, or other terminal equipment), customer premises wiring, or network facilities will not be available at the service user's service due date
- To facilitate the normal relocation or rearrangement of existing service(s) (e.g., internal organizational moves) unless required to support the start of a new NSEP telecommunications service
- To disconnect existing service(s) unless required to support the start of a new NSEP telecommunications service
- To obtain the U.S. half-circuit segment(s) or the U.S. tail (extension) segment(s) of an international telecommunications service(s) for which the foreign half-circuit segment(s) or the foreign tail (extension) segment(s) will not be available at the service user's service due date.

It is the responsibility of each TSP service user to request provisioning priority only when other avenues to obtain the service have been attempted and invocation is the final means to obtain the service within the time required.

### **5.4 REQUESTING AN EMERGENCY PROVISIONING PRIORITY**

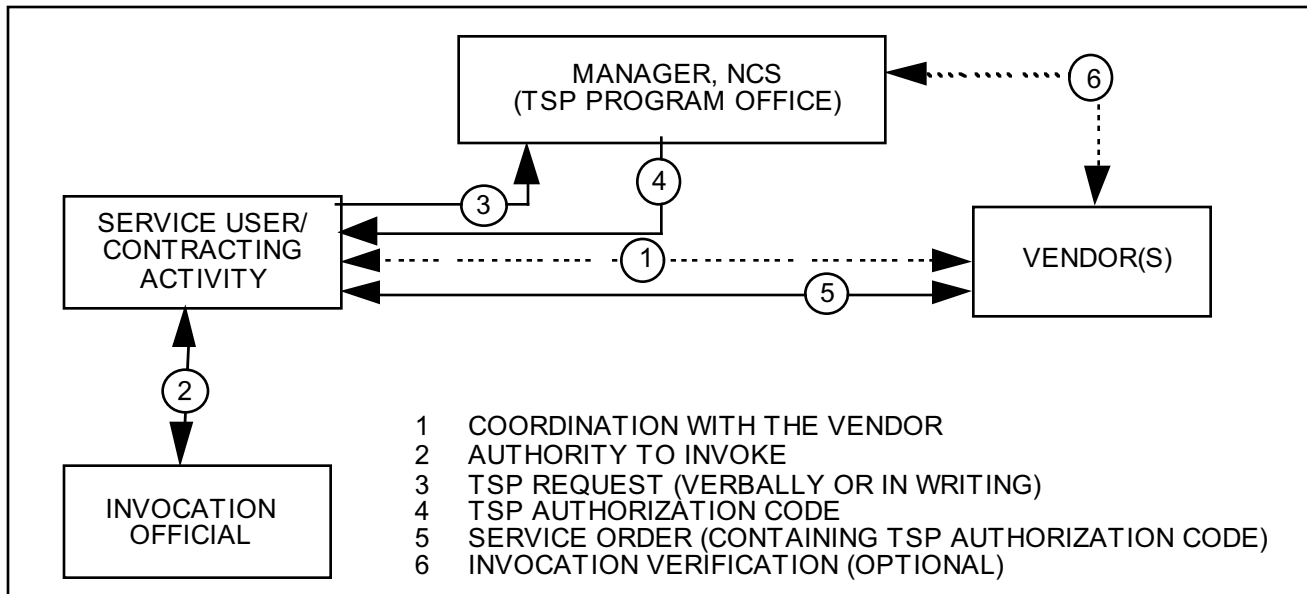
A service user with a critical requirement for provisioning a new service in response to an emergency may request an Emergency provisioning priority (E). (Paragraph 6.7, item 7b, describes the criteria a service must meet to qualify for the Emergency category.)

In addition to meeting the referenced criteria, for an NSEP service to be assigned an Emergency provisioning priority, the need for a service has to be so critical that the service must be provisioned at the earliest possible time, without regard to the cost to the service user of obtaining the service.

The process of requesting an Emergency provisioning priority and invoking NSEP treatment is depicted in figure 5-1. A service user in this situation should first contact a service vendor to determine if the service vendor can respond to the requirement without invocation.

Taking this action ensures two things: first, an invocation is avoided if the service vendor can satisfy the requirement using standard procedures; second, the service vendor is alerted to the fact that the emergency exists and that the service will be required in the immediate future.

Figure 5 - 1

**EMERGENCY PROVISIONING**

If the service vendor cannot respond using standard or expediting procedures the service user next contacts their invocation official, stating the requirement and the circumstances that make invocation necessary. If the invocation official agrees to authorize the invocation, the service user next contacts the TSP Program Office and requests an Emergency provisioning priority. The TSP Program Office is available to receive these requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The TSP Program Office receives the request, normally by phone followed by a TSP Request For Service Users (SF 315) and verifies both the requirement and that the name of the invocation official is on file at the TSP Program Office.

After the service user has received the provisioning priority (in a TSP Authorization Code), the service user gives it to a service vendor either verbally or on a service order. The service order should be passed to the service vendor without delay. If passed verbally, written confirmation must be submitted within two working days. Service vendors are not required to accept invocation of Emergency provisioning without the accompanying TSP Authorization Code and the name, title, and commercial phone number of the invocation official, unless the service user or their contracting activity asserts they are unable to communicate with either the TSP Program Office or the FCC.<sup>1</sup>

The TSP Authorization Code is the service vendor's legal authority to give the Emergency TSP service preferential treatment. The service vendor may choose to contact the TSP Program Office if there are any questions regarding the TSP assignment. The service vendor may not, however, delay processing the service request for verification purposes (see paragraph 5.1, Invocation of NSEP Treatment).

After 30 days, assignments of Emergency provisioning priority levels that have not been passed to the service vendor are revoked by the TSP Program Office unless extended for another 30 day period.

## **5.5 REQUESTING AN ESSENTIAL PROVISIONING PRIORITY**

The purpose of priority provisioning for an Essential NSEP service is to satisfy a requirement for a new NSEP service that must be installed by a specific date that cannot be met without invocation. Essential services may be assigned provisioning priority levels 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1.

In most cases, an Essential service will be assigned a restoration priority and a provisioning priority at the same level. (Paragraph 6.6, item 6a, describes the Essential service

<sup>1</sup> Whenever a TSP Service order does not contain the TSP Authorization Code, the service user will obtain and pass the NCS-assigned TSP Authorization Code to the service vendor at the earliest opportunity.

subcategories. Paragraph 6.6, item 6b, describes the criteria a service must meet to qualify for the subcategories.)

The first step for a service user with an Essential service provisioning requirement is to contact a service vendor to determine if the service vendor can satisfy the requirement. The purpose of this initial contact is to give the service vendor an opportunity to say whether they can meet the required service date without an invocation.

If the service vendor informs the user that the service can not be provisioned by the required date using normal procedures, the service user will need to invoke NSEP treatment. The service user will contact their invocation official and state the criticality of the service provisioning requirement and the circumstances that require invocation. If the invocation official agrees to authorize the invocation, the user will contact the TSP Program Office and request a provisioning priority. Provisioning priorities will not be assigned without the concurrence of the service user's invocation official.

If the service user requests a provisioning priority via telephone, the verbal request must be followed by a TSP Request. (Verbal requests for Essential provisioning priorities will normally only be accepted during regular work hours.) The TSP Program Office will verify the requirement and that the name of the invocation official is on file with the TSP Program Office. The TSP Program Office will then assign the provisioning priority and forward it (in a TSP Authorization Code) to the service user. (If the invocation official has not been identified to the TSP Program Office, as required by paragraph 7.6, the TSP Program Office will be unable to assign a TSP Authorization Code.)

After receiving the TSP Authorization Code, the service user will include it on a service order to the service vendor in order to obtain priority provisioning. (The service user may, however, choose not to pass the TSP Authorization Code to the vendor if the service is no longer required by the due date. If the TSP Authorization Code is not passed to the service vendor, then invocation has not occurred. If the provisioning priority is no longer needed, the service user must notify the TSP Program Office.) The TSP Authorization Code is the service vendor's legal authority to give the Essential TSP service preferential treatment. The service vendor is then required to make their best effort to provide the service by the due date. The service vendor may charge authorized costs to the service user for the faster-than-normal provisioning they are providing.